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» To find Labour Left Internationalists and talk with us, look out for our stalls and bulletin-distributors outside the conference and outside The World Transformed, or direct-message us on Twitter.

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DEMOCRACY AND DEBATE

The National Executive (NEC), as often in the past, will try to ram through conference rule changes revealed only days in advance. (By contrast, rule changes proposed by CLPs and unions can be considered only a year and a bit after submission, and cannot return to the same "objective" without three party conferences intervening: 3.II.2.H).

The worst is a return to the pre-2019 proviso that motions must be "contemporary motions", referring to events in a narrow window and not covered by the NPF.

In the Ed Miliband years, that proviso was used to rule very many CLP motions out of order.

Not so many in 2015-8, but the proviso gives great scope to suppress.

The rulebook says: "Conference has the right to refer back part of any document without rejecting the policy document as a whole" (3.II.2.G). The CAC has unilaterally suppressed that right (in operation since 2017) for the NPF document coming to conference, on the pretext that it is a "final" document. Oddly, the CAC motions document of 25 Sep tags motions over the 250-

word limit with "refer to NPF", so the argument that there is no longer an NPF process to "refer back" to falls.

The drift is back towards the high days of Blairism, when CLPs (before 2004) had no say in what motions got debated, and when Blair himself boasted of his contempt for conference decisions. Even this year, the leadership is likely to use rulebook clause 1.V – the "Party programme... shall be based on the rolling programme of work of the National Policy Forum" – to argue that the NPF document overrides all conference motions.

Support challenges to the CAC (first thing Sunday) oppose the NEC rule changes (Sunday afternoon)." □

FREE OUR UNIONS

The Free Our Unions backed by dozens of unions branches, committees, and local Labour Parties, as well as four national trade unions – IWGB, FBU, PCS, and RMT. It campaigns for the repeal of all anti-trade union laws and calls on the next Labour government to do so.

The campaign also calls for defiance of the Minimum Service law and for Labour councils and authorities to refuse to issue "work notices".

Free Our Unions is calling for a national demonstration from the trade unions against the latest round of anti union legislation. freeourunions.org

BANS AND EXCLUSIONS

Jeremy Corbyn has been arbitrarily banned from standing again in Islington North, and it looks like Diane Abbott will get the same in Hackney North and Stoke Newington. Seizing on a row about gross mismanagement by Hackney council's Labour mayor, now himself suspended, and a spurious pretext about (in fact minor) constituency boundary changes, the party machine has put in appointees to replace Hackney North CLP's elected officers. Jamie Driscoll was banned from even contesting the selection for North East mayor. Neal Lawson, a centrist Labour figure, was threatened with exclusion in June 2023.

In March 2022 the NEC banned Workers' Liberty, and in July 2021 Socialist Appeal and three other groups. Labour leaders have suggested the bans and exclusions are mainly about purging antisemitism. Yet Workers' Liberty is well-known for campaigning for decades - by

polemic, debate, education, discussion - against antisemitism within the left. The latest available report on disciplinary action (for the first half of 2023) shows 81 cases of political exclusion (79% of 92 cases including those 81 upheld), and 30 charges of antisemitism (45% of 75 cases including those 30 upheld). Some exclusions for antisemitism have been justified, but many have been on vague guilt-by-association grounds. The leadership has blocked rather than promoted real educational debate.

Many of the ultra-Blairites in Starmer's back office evidently think the error in the high days of Blairism was not "control-freakery" but rather not being fierce enough about destroying Labour's traditional pluralism. Pluralism is a necessity if Labour is to serve a diverse and critical-minded working class rather than a caste of careerist "professional politicians", "third sector" bosses, and the like. □

SIGN UP AGAINST ROSEBANK

A statement and template motion for CLPs to express opposition to the Tories' rush to issue licences for further fossil-fuel fields including the giant Rosebank field and to "max out" the North Sea, and the Labour leaders' pledge "not to revoke" those licences. Sadly none of the motions to conference contains a clear call on this: sign bit.ly/lab-rb to make your voice heard. □

MOTIONS TO LOOK OUT FOR

The FBU and the CWU have submitted motions to tighten Labour's "New Deal for Working People" commitments, and can hope to get the topic prioritised. "Workers' rights" is classified as a separate topic, with motions from eight CLPs including two which call for repeal of the Thatcher anti-strike laws.

Most union motions are bland. Spikier motions from Aslef and TSSA calling for the restoration of rail ticket offices and a Unite motion for public ownership of the energy industry are classified under "Critical infrastructure" (even though Unite's might better fit under "Climate change", "Energy", or "Public ownership").

46 CLPs have submitted motions on housing. It failed to get prioritised in 2022. It must this year! Key ideas in many motions are 100,000 new council homes a year, abolition of the "right to buy" scam, and rent controls for private tenants.

20 CLPs have motions classified as "reform of universal credit", almost all calling for the abolition of the two-child benefit cap.

16 CLPs have motions classified as "the UK and Europe". Most are bland,

but one, from Edinburgh Central, includes clear calls for return to European free movement, to the Single Market, and to the Customs Union, and an aim to rejoin the EU.

10 CLPs have motions on Asylum and Immigration. The strongest are from Southampton Test, Oldham East, and Huntingdon, calling for repeal of Tory Illegal Migration Act and the Borders Act, safe and legal routes for seeking asylum, allowing asylum seekers to work, scrapping "No Recourse to Public Funds" and NHS charges for migrants, and voting rights for all UK residents.

13 CLPs have motions classified under "climate change and ecology", many calling for public ownership of the whole energy industry. That call also appears in a motion from Unite classified under "critical infrastructure" and in some of the **13** CLP motions under "public ownership", mostly calling for public ownership of all utilities. Of **12** CLP motions classified under "water", **9** call for public ownership. There is also an "Energy" heading (eight motions, mostly blander).

A call to scrap tuition fees is in the

Young Labour motion, one of six classified under "Education", but not in the few motions under "Higher education".

9 CLPs have motions classified under "Health funding and structure", with Calder Valley's the strongest. Three weaker motions are classified separately under "An NHS fit for the future".

7 CLPs have motions under "Economic change"; two call for a wealth tax.

13 CLPs have come back again with motions on electoral reform.

6 CLPs have motions on "Equalities", with the Leeds East motion calling for gender self-ID as already legislated in many countries.

9 CLPs have motions on free school meals, most calling for them to be universal.

6 CLPs have motions on social care, and nine motions on violence against women and girls, sadly none very strong. The two motions on abortion rights are weak, so getting something strong depends on women's conference prioritising a good motion to go forward. □

STAND WITH UKRAINE

The Tories are supporting Ukraine in their own way and for their own reasons. But the labour movement has every reason to support Ukraine too.

This is an anti-imperialist and democratic struggle. Putin's brutal war has led to tens of thousands of deaths; many millions fleeing and internally displaced; and horrendous war crimes and human rights abuses by the Russian army.

For the sake of resisting growing right-wing authoritarianism globally, Ukraine must win.

The UK labour movement has a problem with political

forces like the *Morning Star* and the Stop the War Coalition, which oppose support for Ukraine.

We can stand with Ukraine while also standing with its labour movement – which is strongly committed to the war against Russian imperialism – against the Ukrainian ruling class.

Alongside more military aid to help Ukraine liberate itself, we demand cancellation of its external debt to facilitate both victory against Putin and just post-war reconstruction. □

CONTACT US

Contact us at conference:

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» momentuminternationalists.org

» team@momentuminternationalists.org

» twitter.com/LabourLeftInt

LABOUR LEFT INTERNATIONALISTS

Labour Left Internationalists – previously Momentum Internationalists – is a network of Labour Party members founded in 2020 by supporters of left anti-Brexit campaign Labour for a Socialist Europe. We stand for:

» Aggressive support for strikes and workers' struggles;

» Consistent internationalism, including fighting for free movement and to reverse Brexit;

» Arguing to replace capitalism with socialism, a radically new society based on common ownership and democratic and workers' control, not profit-making;

» Radical policies so the labour movement can serve working-class interests and push towards socialism;

» Democratising Labour, making conference the party's sovereign decision-making body. □

PRIORITY BALLOTS AND COMPOSITES

Union and CLP motions are classified by the Conference Arrangements Committee under subject headings. In priority ballots the unions then choose six headings for debate, and the CLPs six; and meetings composite the motions in each of the 12 headings chosen. The snare is that officials often seek to "lose" spikier wording in the compositing process, and to narrow it down to a single composite under the heading.

We suggest the following six items

as priorities: Asylum and immigration, Climate change and ecology, Health funding and structures, Housing, Reform of Universal Credit, UK-EU relations.

Plenty of other headings have some good motions (e.g. public ownership, workers' rights, economic change, education), but those six may be the ones with a good chance of being prioritised by CLPs (the unions will chose others), and of creating at least some pressure if passed.

□

JULY NPF REPORT

Some good things remain in the July NPF report, but mostly the 112 pages represent the triumph over working-class interests of giving "certainty" to and wooing big business, and of seeking a "socially conservative" profile to soft-soap "red wall" voters rather than convince them.

The report includes:

- ramp up public capital investment into the green economy to £28 billion a year in the second half of the Parliament at the latest
- bring railways into public ownership as contracts with existing operators expire or are broken
- repeal the Trade Union Act 2016 and the Minimum Service law; allow electronic balloting for disputes.

There are studiously vague words about decriminalising abortion: "Labour believes that abortion is an essential part of health care which is highly regulated and should not be subjected to custodial sanctions".

The "New Deal for Working People" is mostly there, but made vaguer (e.g. "strengthen statutory sick pay" for "increase statutory sick pay").

The sharper language in the report is mostly where it seeks to give "certainty" to big business. "Labour will not borrow to fund day-to-day

spending, and we will reduce national debt as a share of the economy". There will be "no return to freedom of movement", i.e. immigrant workers will depend on employer goodwill for visas. "Labour will not return to the [EU] single market or customs union".

The gist is a plan neither to raise taxes on the rich (bar closing a few loopholes) nor to raise borrowing to cover such tasks as restoring the NHS and social care. And not to cut military spending, either. So, almost no cash for public services. (But two motions to conference under "Economic change" make welcome calls for a wealth tax).

The NHS, like much else, gets only warm words. The document makes much of better preventive medicine, but scarcely promises new resources. □

WORKERS AGAINST THE CCP

Newly formed campaign

• **N**bringing together workers, activists, campaigns from Tibetan, Hker & Uyghurs & more to fight CCP oppression
• Follow @WorkersAntiCCP

PUT NEURODIVERSITY IN THE MANIFESTO

In 2021, the NPF failed to include neurodiversity at all in its report, despite ample submissions to it, and that year's Party Conference voted to refer

back the report because of this omission. By again failing to mention the issue at all in its "final" report, the NPF has disregarded the democratic decision of

Labour conference.

Sign this statement at bit.ly/nd-man to demand Labour includes neurodiversity in its manifesto. □

BREXIT ISN'T DONE

The Tories have recently postponed checks on imports from the EU to the UK for the fifth time, fearing the inevitable effect in raising prices. But those checks are likely to come in 2024.

The Tories have also stalled on wholesale scrapping of environmental and labour safeguards derived from the EU. But that is what they want to do. That, for them, is the whole purpose of Brexit.

The revisions to the Northern Ireland Protocol are only a way to fudge, for a while, the inescapable conflict between wanting a "hard" border between the UK and the EU, yet a "soft" border between Northern Ireland (part of the UK) and Ireland (part of the EU). The conflict will be sharpened as the UK moves away from EU-agreed regulations.

As socialists, we want lower borders. Higher borders between the UK and the EU make extra obstacles to workers' unity between countries, and among migrant and "local" workers even within countries.

Whatever the dreams about "Lexit" (a left "Brexit"), it hasn't happened and isn't going to happen. Opinion surveys show that the majority knows that the only way out from the Tory-designed Brexit path we've been set on is to reverse Brexit.

Rejoining the European free-movement area, rejoining the Single Market, and rejoining the Customs Union, are still relatively accessible because the Tories have not dared to go far yet with their Brexit plans. Norway is in the free-movement area and (mostly) in the Single Market; Turkey is in the Customs Union.

And we also want to be part of EU-wide democracy (and of the battle to expand EU-wide democracy beyond its present miserable level), so the aim must be to rejoin the EU. □

SOLIDARITY WITH THE IRANIAN WORKERS' MOVEMENT

A new committee set up to mobilise unions and labour groups in support of the revolutionary uprising and workers' protests in Iran and in opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran's rights violations and executions. Collect our brand new bulletin outside the conference.

The Committee is chaired by John McDonnell MP.

» More info: www.swiw.org

» Email: solidarity.iranian.workers@gmail.com

» Twitter: @swiwcommittee

DEMONSTRATIONS AND PROTESTS

» On Saturday a demonstration for the NHS will march from Liverpool Women's Hospital (12:30) to the conference centre. At the conference centre it will be joined by a protest for abortion rights.

» On Sunday, 12:30 to 2 from Duke's Dock, Gower St L3 4AS, the Student Cost of Living Campaign will protest for free education and abolition of tuition fees.

» On Monday, 10:30, India Labour Solidarity, outside the ACC conference venue, in support of Indian workers.

» On Monday, 2pm, Ban Bibby Barge, protesting the company responsible for the Bibby Barge currently housing migrants in terrible conditions, The Black E, 1 Great George Street, Liverpool, L1 5EW. □

LABOUR CAMPAIGN FOR FREE MOVEMENT

The Labour Campaign for Free Movement is a network of Labour members and supporters campaigning to defend and extend free movement and migrants' rights.

» labourfreemovement.org

» Twitter: @labfreemovement

UKRAINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The Ukraine Solidarity Campaign seeks to organise solidarity and provide information in support of Ukrainian socialists and trade unionists, campaigning for working class, and democratic rights, against imperialist intervention and national chauvinism. It seeks to co-ordinate socialist and labour movement organisations who agree on this task, regardless of differences and opinions on other questions.

» ukrainesolidarity.org



TRANS RIGHTS

Seventeen years ago now, reflecting decades of progress in medical and legal thinking, a conference of experts formulated the Yogyakarta Principles (bit.ly/yy-p) as a statement of international law, declaring that states must "take all necessary legislative, administrative and other measures to fully respect and legally recognise each person's self-defined gender identity".

Over those 17 years, several states, mostly in Europe and South America, have legislated accordingly. A recent EU-funded report (bit.ly/sd-g) surveys results from nine European states, including Ireland.

"In all surveyed countries, no known case of fraudulent or criminal intent has been reported. Countries with self-determination models often also have high standards protecting women's rights and gender equality... self-determination is not a threat to women's quotas and rather supports gender equality measures".

Legal gender self-ID is only part of the issue, as shown by the fact that even when legal gender reassignment is easy, most transgender people do not use it. Availability of health care, and prejudice from employers or the wider public, may remain major problems.

But the report suggests no foundation for the agitation (noisier in Britain than in almost any other country) about trans rights threatening women's rights. We urge delegates to support the Leeds East motion under "Equalities" if that subject heading is prioritised for debate. □

INDIA LABOUR SOLIDARITY

India Labour Solidarity exists to support workers' movements against the anti-worker, anti-people, anti-democratic labour and other policies of the Indian state, and to build links between the Indian and UK labour movements – including in the Labour Party. It's crucial Labour stands with the labour movements of a country that is aiming to become a significant trade partner of the UK.

Come to an informal ILS alongside our supporter Nadia Whitome MP on Monday 9 October at 7.30pm @ The Casa Bar, 29 Hope Street, Liverpool, L1 9BQ

» bit.ly/inlabsol